

## Assignment 1: Introduction

In these photographs I wanted to explore notions of disability, what is obvious and what may not be so.

My mother-in-law has great difficulty with her mobility, she can only walk short distances with the aid of a stick, anything longer needs a wheelchair.

My mother is physically active but has been diagnosed with dementia. If you looked at her you would not think she has a disability.

Therefore I wanted two versions of the same story of disability, the first said that only one of the two people had a disability, the second version challenges this.

In Series One I gave the impression that only one of the people had a disability, I concentrated on full length shots of the two people concentrating on the notion of physical disability. Here my mother-in-law had to use her stick, my mother looked active and the wheelchair emphasised the notion of physical disability.

Series 2 was much more of a challenge – how do you portray notions of dementia and how this can affect people's abilities? I thought about how the condition manifests itself, in my mother's case with a lot of repetition of what she has just said due to short term memory loss. I thought I could try to portray this with the repetition of a number of head shots (the head being where the mental abilities lie). I started with a picture showing again the physical problems my mother-in-law has, but after that I concentrated on head portraits. I included the pill box as a counter-point to the wheelchair in series one, emphasising that medication is needed. The days and mornings/afternoons on the box are meant to show the help that is needed to remember to take the pills at the right time. I also photographed it 'upside down' to suggest a little bit of confusion.

I decided to use black and white rather than colour for the images, I just felt that it suited the topic and the nature of the images and the people better.